

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 H-02 ISO-00 CA-01 SSO-00 PPTE-00 /010 W
-----049762 140921Z /10

O R 140715Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL SYDNEY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8429
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL BRISBANE
AMCONSUL PERTH
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

UNCLAS SYDNEY 1402

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC (BROWN, BARBARA CAROL)
SUBJECT: W/W BARBARA CAROL BROWN 4/30/55 TEXAS

REF: STATE 150155 (NOTAL)

1. SENATOR JOHN TOWER INTERESTED.
2. ON JUNE 6 ROBERT BROWN TELEPHONED TO ADVISE THE CONSULATE GENERAL THAT HE HAD COME TO AUSTRALIA TO SEARCH FOR HIS DAUGHTER BARBARA CAROL BROWN, REPORTED TO HAVE LEFT BEECROFT, NEAR SYDNEY, ON MAY 17, TRAVELING ALONE, HITCHIKING TO BRISBANE. NO WORD HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM HER SINCE THEN EVEN THOUGH SHE HAD EARLIER WRITTEN ABOUT EVERY FIVE DAYS. HE STATES THAT HE HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE LOCAL POLICE AND WAS RECEIVING EXCELLENT COOPERATION. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT HE ANTICIPATED RECEIVING GOOD COOPERATION FROM THE MEDIA. AFTER A CHECK OF OUR RECORDS, MR. BROWN WAS INFORMED THAT THE CONSULATE GENERAL HAD NO RECORD OF HIS DAUGHTER, BUT WOULD REMAIN ON THE LOOKOUT. HE WAS CAUTIONED HOWEVER, THAT SINCE SHE WAS LONGER A MINOR, IF SHE DID COME TO OUR ATTENTION, WE COULD DO NO MORE THAN INFORM HER OF HIS INTEREST IN CONTACTING HER. MR. BROWN EXPRESSED HIS UNDERSTANDING. THE CONSULATE GENERAL SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED OTHER POSTS IN AUSTRALIA, BY PHONE, OF CAROL BROWN'S APPARENT DISAPPEARANCE.

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2. MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE DISAPPEARANCE BEGAN THAT EVENING WITH ONE SYDNEY TABLOID CARRYING A FRONT PAGE ARTICLE, INCLUDING PHOTO OF CAROL, IN ITS LATE EDITION. OTHER PAPERS HAVE FOLLOWED WITH LESS CONSPICUOUS ARTICLES CONCERNING THE SEARCH, AND T.V. NEWS COVERAGE, INCLUDING AMONG OTHER THINGS, MR. BROWN'S PERSONAL APPEAL FOR INFORMATION, HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE. FINAL ARTICLE APPEARED ON JUNE 13 REPORTING THAT MR. BROWN WAS RETURNING

TO THE UNITED STATES, BUT HAD OFFERED A DOLS 1000.00 REWARD FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING HIS DAUGHTER'S WHEREABOUTS. THAT EVENING MR. BROWN HAD A SECOND LENGTHY AND SYMPATHETIC INTERVIEW ON THE ABC NATIONAL IN WHICH HE EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS RETURNING HOME AND WAS MAKING ONE FINAL APPEAL FOR INFORMATION AS TO HIS DAUGHTER'S WHEREABOUTS.

3. BEFORE RETURNING TO THE U.S. MR. BROWN CALLED AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL AND SPOKE WITH CONSULAR OFFICER RALPH JONES, INFORMING OF HIS PLANS AND LEAVING THE TELEPHONE NUMBER OF W.R. TREDINNICK, OF SHELL OIL SYDNEY, AS HIS LOCAL CONTACT. MR. BROWN EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD NOT CALLED ON THE CONSULATE GENERAL FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN RECEIVING SUCH SUPERB COOPERATION FROM THE LOCAL POLICE. THE CONOFF OBSERVED THAT HE HAD BEEN AWARE OF THE EXTENT OF POLICE ASSISTANCE, HAVING CHECKED INTO THE MATTER ON JUNE 8. MR. BROWN WENT ON TO REPORT THAT ALL EARLY LEADS AS TO HIS DAUGHTERS WHEREABOUTS HAD GONE NOWHERE, BUT THAT POLICE EFFORTS WERE AS INTENSIVE AS EVER. CONOFF JONES THANKED MR. BROWN FOR COMING IN PERSON AND ASSURED HIM OF OUR CONTINUING INTEREST, AND OUR CONFIDENCE THAT LOCAL POLICE EFFORTS WOULD NOT SLACKEN.

4. THE FIRST NEW DEVELOPMENT SINCE MR. BROWN'S DEPARTURE OCCURRED THIS MORNING (JUNE 14) WHEN TWO PERSONS AT KEMPSEY, A NEW SOUTH WALES TOWN ABOUT MIDWAY BETWEEN SYDNEY AND BRISBANE, POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED A PHOTOGRAPH OF BARBARA BROWN AS THAT OF THE YOUNG WOMAN THEY HAD SEEN HITCHIKING NEAR THERE ON MAY 19. THIS IS THE FIRST SOLID INFORMATION TO MISS BROWN'S WHEREABOUTS UNCLASSIFIED

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AT ANY TIME AFTER LEAVING BEECROFT TWO DAYS BEFORE. MORE ENCOURAGING YET IS THE REPORT OF A NATIONAL PARK RANGER WHO IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT ON JUNE 12 HE SAW MISS BROWN IN THE COMPANY OF ANOTHER FEMALE BACKPACKER ON A BEACH NEAR KEMPSEY. AS A RESULT OF THESE TWO REPORTS, THE NSW POLICE ARE NOW INTENSIFYING THEIR SEARCH EFFORTS IN THE AREA, AUGMENTED BY AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ANNOUNCEMENTS ON THE LOCAL RADIO STATION. (SIMILAR ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE BEING MADE OVERNCLL STATIONS ON THE NEW SOUTH WALES COAST NORTH OF SYDNEY. IF ALL THESE EFFORTS DO NOT BEAR FRUIT SOON, MR. TREDINNICK INFORMS THE CONSULATE GENERAL THAT HE WILL CONSIDER BROADCASTING PAID ANNOUNCEMENTS, STRESSING MR. BROWN'S REWARD OFFER. (HE ALSO INFORMED THE CONGEN THAT ALL THE ABOVE NEW INFORMATION HAS BEEN PHONED TO MR. BROWN).

5. AMCONSUL BRISBANE, WITH WHOM SYDNEY HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH BY PHONE CONCERNING THE SEARCH, REPORTS THAT EFFORTS BY THE QUEENSLAND POLICKO HAVE FAILED TO TURN UP ANY EVIDENCE THAT MISS BROWN EVER ENTERED THE STATE. MAIL STILL AWAITS HER AT THE BRISBANE GPO, WHERE A MESSAGE HAS BEEN LEFT FOR HER TO CONTACT THE POLICE. AS A FURTHER PRECAUTION, THE POST OFFICE HAS AGREED TO NOTIFY THE POLICE IN ANY CASE, SHOULD THE MAIL BE CALLED FOR. PHOTOS OF MISS BROWN HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO

POLICE AS FAR NORTH AS CAIRNS.

6. THE CONSULATE GENERAL IS CONVINCED THAT, AS HAS INVARIABLY BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST, AUSTRALIAN POLICE FORCES, GENEROUSLY ASSISTED BY THE MEDIA AND OTHER HELPFUL PERSONS AND INSTITUTIONS, ARE MAKING EVERY CONCEIVABLE EFFORT TO LOCATE MISS BROWN. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR CLOSELY THIS SEARCH AND REPORT NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO THE DEPT AS THEY OCCUR. WE REGRET THAT THE PRESS OF BUSINESS AT THIS TIME DID NOT PERMIT EARLIER PREPARATION OF A REPORT, BUTY UNTIL A FEW DAYS AGO MR. BROWN WAS HERE AND IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH US. IN ANY CASE, THE DEPT MAY ASSURE SENATOR TOWER THAT AMERICAN CONSULAR OFFICERS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THIS MATTER CLOSELY, RENDERING ALL POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SYDNEY01402
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780248-0190
Format: TEL
From: SYDNEY
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780658/aaaabykf.tel
Line Count: 136
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b771e888-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 150155
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2347573
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: W/W BARBARA CAROL BROWN 4/30/55 TEXAS
TAGS: CASC, (BROWN, BARBARA CAROL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b771e888-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014